

have to say and care what you think and care how you feel about your country. And I'm telling you, the American people have to decide how we're going into the 21st century. There is no status quo option, and you don't have to guess about our views. We now have almost 2 years where the leaders of the two parties and their philosophies have become clear. And that is a great, good fortune.

I believe that it's clear that we did what we said we'd do in 1992. We have cut the deficit in half, 8½ million new jobs, a new commitment to invest in our people and our future and our communities. We did that. I believe in Florida you can see it. The unemployment rate is 2 percent lower. We brought the Summit of the Americas here. We brought SOUTHCOM here. We have a commitment here to help people do what they can to deal with the challenges you face today.

It is clear that we have a record. But the far more important thing is, this is a record to build on, not to sit on. We have created jobs, but we haven't raised everybody's income. We have to do more to allow people who are working for a living to be able to generate lifetime education, lifetime access to health care, and develop a pension they can carry around with them, too, if they move from job to job.

We have done a lot of things to try to bring the American people together and to bring down the crime rate and to reestablish a common national commitment to the preservation of our environment, but there is a lot more to do. We have done a lot of things to do things to make the Government work better and to be smaller and less burdensome to you, but Lord knows there is more to do.

And we have taken a stand for America's role in the world. We dare not adopt the easy, short-term, but short-sighted isolationist position that others have advocated. So I ask you—I thank you for what you have done here tonight, but it's a long time between now and November.

So I ask you to take every opportunity you can to be good citizens between now and then. Talk with your friends and your neighbors and your co-workers. Engage people over coffee. Visit with them on the weekends when you run into them wherever they are

and say, you know, this is an election about America's future. This is an election which will determine what kind of country we're going to be in the 21st century. This is an election which will determine what our children and our grandchildren will live like. And this is an election in which I have taken a stand that I want to tell you about. That's what I want you to do. If you do, it will be fine.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:48 p.m. at the Biltmore Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Marvin Rosen, finance director, Democratic National Committee; Larry Hawkins, Dade County commissioner; and Democratic fundraisers Mitch Berger and M.J. Parker. A portion of the content of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

### **Remarks at the Signing Ceremony for the United States-Israel Counterterrorism Accord and an Exchange With Reporters**

*April 30, 1996*

**The President.** Good afternoon, Mr. Prime Minister and members of the Israeli and American delegations, ladies and gentlemen. For the past 3 years, Israel and the United States have worked hand in hand to advance the peace process in the Middle East. Today, with this U.S.-Israel Counterterrorism Cooperation Accord, we strengthen our partnership to stop the enemies of peace.

With every new step along the path to peace, its enemies grow more and more desperate. They know a new day is dawning in the Middle East, that the vast majority of its people want to enjoy the blessings of a normal life. Their answer, more violence and terror, more bullets and bombs, may seem senseless, but it is the product of cold calculation. By murdering innocent people, they aim to kill the growing hope for peace itself.

We will not do what the enemies of peace want. We will not let our anger turn us away from the pursuit of peace in the Middle East. Maintaining our resolve for peace does not mean, however, turning the other cheek. We must do everything in our power to stop the

killing and bring the terrorists to justice. That is the only way to give those who have chosen peace the confidence they need that they have made the right choice and the courage to keep moving forward.

This agreement does just that by deepening the cooperation between our two countries in the fight against terrorism. Prime Minister Peres and I worked on it during my visit to Israel last month, in the wake of a terrible string of suicide bombings. Now we have agreed upon areas for greater cooperation, on information sharing, on research and development, on training and technical assistance, on investigation, prosecution, and extradition. In each one we will look at very practical ways in which we can work together better.

I am pleased to sign this accord. And I am also pleased that the budget I signed just last week included the \$50 million I requested earlier this year for our joint antiterrorism efforts in this year, including today's accords. I thank the Congress for their prompt action here and for the bipartisan support it received.

To my friend the Prime Minister and the people of Israel, let me say the United States stands with Israel through good times and bad, because our countries share the same ideals: freedom, tolerance, democracy. We know that wherever those ideals are under siege in one country they are threatened everywhere. We have never been more determined to achieve and to defend those ideals and to achieve our goal of a just and lasting peace for all the people of the Middle East.

Mr. Prime Minister.

**Prime Minister Peres.** I would like to thank from the depths of my heart, in the name of the people of Israel, the President, his delegation, his team, and him, personally, for really showing the deepest understanding that one can hope for, the immediate response whenever it is necessary, and the friendship that he has offered time and again over the last years.

I see the difference between the camp of terror and the free world. The camp of terror is operating under orders; it's disciplined; it's organized. The camp of freedom keeps its freedom. You cannot lead the camp of free-

dom unless you have a leader of great inspiration and outstanding capacity.

In my own judgment, Bill Clinton has this great capacity to inspire the whole free world with his ideas; with his determination; with his capacity to distinguish what is right and what is wrong, what is immediate and what is long-range, what is support and what is response. I feel myself very lucky to see a person like him standing ahead and trying to lead the whole world to peace and to peace for everybody, not just for us, the Israelis, but also for our neighbors; not just for the Middle East, but for Bosnia, Haiti, or other places.

We are going and departing by the end of this century a history of bloodshed, and with Godspeed let's hope that we're entering a different world of peace and understanding.

The President played a major role in bringing peace between us and the Jordanians, between us and the Palestinians. He and his Secretary of State are now opening a new chapter to bring peace between us, Syria, and Lebanon that may be the last peace which is necessary in order to make the peace comprehensive and all-embracing.

Mr. President, I really with a full heart of thanks, would like to express both our admiration and gratefulness to you, to your administration, to the American Congress, to the American people. The world is a better place to live with this sort of a policy and this sort of leadership.

Thank you very much.

### **Middle East Peace Process**

**Q.** Mr. Prime Minister, those agreements you're talking about that you'd like to have by all accounts will require Israel giving up territory, buffer zone. The help you got on this trip—antimissile help, counterterrorism help—will that make it easier for you to relinquish territory in order to get an agreement with Syria and with Lebanon?

**Prime Minister Peres.** You're asking me?

**Q.** Yes, sir.

**Prime Minister Peres.** We don't intend to remain in Lebanon anyway. We don't have any territorial ambitions concerning Lebanon. And on the first right occasion our

army will be more than happy to leave the territory of Lebanon.

We do recognize the international border between Lebanon and ourselves. If the Lebanese Government will take charge and the Lebanese Army will become the only armed authority in Lebanon and disarm all the other terroristic organizations, I see very little reason for us to remain in Lebanon.

**Q.** Yes, sir, but I asked you about Syria and Lebanon, and I asked you if the agreements and the help you've gotten here on this visit will ease your giving up territory, which you're committed to anyhow we know. Does it make it easier for you?

**Prime Minister Peres.** Well, you're talking about territory, and I'm talking about peace. Territory——

**Q.** I'm talking about land for peace.

**Prime Minister Peres.** I understand. I mean, if it wouldn't be done what we are doing here, I'm afraid that terror would win the day, and that would be the end of the peace process. We consider the last campaign as a campaign against peace. Now to answer your question, we have announced that in order to attain peace we are ready to make territorial compromise. Don't expect me now to lay the map on the table.

**The President.** If I could just say one other thing related to this, this last agreement that was reached and the first one in writing to restore the cease-fire and to set up a monitoring mechanism that involves Israel and Lebanon and Syria, and involves France, who has been very active in this, and then has a larger consultative group that involves Russia and other countries. Because this is in writing and because it gives us a chance to restore a normal life there, if this can be properly implemented, I think that it will be a good signal or a good, if you will, a test run to see how—whether other progress can be made.

And I have talked to the Prime Minister about this. We are all very concerned about the civilians, the innocent people in Northern Israel, and all the people in southern Lebanon who have lost loved ones and have suffered great economic disruption. I think we have to implement this agreement faithfully and help the Lebanese to rebuild their infra-

structure and restore the stability of their populations.

And I appreciate what the Prime Minister has said to me about that. I wanted to thank you for that.

**Prime Minister Peres.** I told the President that Israel will clearly respect religiously the understanding that was achieved by the Secretary and his team upon the invitation of the President. Then I told the President that Israel will participate in the effort to restore the damages in Lebanon, together with other nations, and we shall do so.

**The President.** Thank you for that.

**Q.** Mr. President, The Washington Post wrote today that you are betting on Mr. Peres as the next Prime Minister, and rightly so. Is that the case?

**The President.** Well, let me say, first of all, in democracies we have—we schedule elections. And that's a good thing. That reminds everybody that the people are in charge. But I think it was not only appropriate it was virtually necessary for the Prime Minister to come here at this time, in the wake of recent events not only in Lebanon but some of the developments in their relationship between Israel and the PLO—as I think all of you know, Mr. Arafat will be here in the next couple of days—so I think his trip here is entirely appropriate, and it was the right thing to do.

The United States has always said that we do not interfere in the internal decisions of other countries, and Israel and the United States are friends and allies and will be no matter who is elected. I hope that will also be the case no matter who is elected in November in the United States. So our policy on that has not changed and will not and should not.

### **Russian and Israeli Elections**

**Q.** But, Mr. President, you said in Moscow recently, regarding the Russian election, that elections have consequences, and you did not dispute that that election would have consequences for relations between your government and whatever government is there. Is that not also true here, sir?

**The President.** Well, and for the Russian people. Then it depends, obviously, on what happens afterward. But all elections have

consequences. But the people who decide what the consequences are are the citizens of the country, in this case, the citizens of Israel. You know, they've shown pretty good judgment for quite a long while now, and I'm sure that the Prime Minister would join me in saying that they're in the driver's seat on that question, not me and not anyone else.

### **Israeli Response to Terrorist Attacks**

**Q.** Mr. Prime Minister, you spoke of the last bombing campaign, so to speak, the four bombings that occurred within little more than a week. In the weeks since there have been no—I hate to use the word “successful”—bombings in Israel. To what would you attribute that?

**Prime Minister Peres.** To three things: To the conference in Sharm al-Sheikh that was initiated by the President and created a spirit of cooperation and understanding to work together in order to stop the acts of bombing and suicidal terror. The second is the more serious measures that Yasser Arafat has taken in Gaza and the territories. I feel that he really started to fight terror, and I say it with appreciation. And the third is because Israel itself—maybe that is from our point of view the first thing—got ourself organized to face this danger. I cannot say that we have a full-fledged answer to the problem, but we are by far much more organized and ready to prevent these sort of actions.

**The President.** Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:57 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House.

### **United States-Israel Joint Statement April 30, 1996**

President Clinton and Prime Minister Peres have concluded two days of intensive discussions on a broad range of issues relating to the U.S.-Israeli relationship. Those discussions reflect the deep, long-standing and unique bonds of friendship which have characterized the U.S.-Israeli relationship and the legacy of shared values, common interests, and mutual respect for democracy that have made this close and special relationship endure.

The President and Prime Minister reviewed the extent of the U.S.-Israeli relationship in all its dimensions. They agreed that this cooperation in security, economic, and diplomatic areas is grounded in institutions that are functioning extremely effectively to the benefit of both countries. At the same time, they agreed that, in view of continuing threats to regional peace and stability, and in particular the dangers posed by proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and advanced military technologies, U.S.-Israeli strategic cooperation will grow in importance.

To this end, the President and the Prime Minister agreed that a steering committee headed by the U.S. Secretary of State and the Israeli Minister of Foreign Affairs would be established to explore means of enhancing and, where appropriate, formalizing, that cooperation. Two working groups will report to the steering committee. The first, dealing with security and defense matters, will consider all options including the possibility of more formal security accords, for how best to meet common threats in the years to come. It will also identify ways to maximize the effectiveness of U.S. aid to Israel. The second will deal with other policy matters relating to U.S.-Israeli strategic cooperation.

The two leaders affirmed that the strategic partnership between the two countries will continue to be based on two key principles: first, the United States unshakable commitment to Israel's security and its determination to minimize the risks and costs Israel confronts as it pursues peace; and second, the U.S.-Israeli mutual commitment to a comprehensive peace and their determination to move toward that goal.

With respect to Israel's security, the President specifically reaffirmed the United States commitment to maintain Israel's qualitative edge and to preserve and to strengthen Israel's capability to deter and defend itself, by itself, against any adversary or likely combination of adversaries.

The President and Prime Minister took great pride in signing the U.S.-Israel Counter-Terrorism Cooperation Accord. This agreement sets out practical measures enabling their two countries to make the best possible use of expertise, resources, and ca-